



nevada sage

news from the department of the interior, bureau of land management • winter 2003

Give a Hoot; Don't Loot

In 25 years as an archaeologist in the Great Basin, Pat Barker has never seen a site that wasn't looted or vandalized in some way.

"Almost all surface sites have projectile points and arrowheads collected; rock shelters have 'looter's holes' where people have dug for artifacts; and rock art sites have graffiti and attempts to remove the art," said Barker, BLM's state archaeologist.

Historic sites show pervasive and random destruction: old wood burned for a campfire, artifacts stolen, and anything standing becomes a target for shooting practice.

"Once something is removed from its original location, we lose 90 percent of the historic value," said Barker. "The only way we have to understand the past is by studying the physical remains in the context of their relationships of where they are and what other things are with them. If taken out of context, the artifact becomes just a pretty souvenir with no historic value in understanding our past."

All cultural and historic resources are protected under federal law, including the National Historic Preservation Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

"Some people will collect an artifact on impulse, then just discard it later or forget about it in a drawer," said Barker. "That

kind of pilfering is a problem, but there are culprits who operate on greed, looting everything they can get their hands on."

Few looters are caught in the act. Those that are brought to trial are usually the result of an informant aiding an investigation. That's how the perpetrator of one of Nevada's most egregious looting cases was caught, brought to trial and convicted of aggravated theft and abuse of a corpse. Sadly, not before he carried out the concentrated destruction of 10,000 years of history and desecration of an Indian burial ground.

Off and on during the 1980s, Jack Lee Harelson excavated nearly 500 cubic yards of material from a remote cave on public land in the Black Rock Desert. He carted home the most pleasing or unusual materials from the cave: sagebrush sandals, hundreds of arrowheads, baskets, cordage, rabbit nets, coiled baskets, funerary objects and the skeletal remains of two Native American children.

Harelson was sentenced to 18 months in jail, fined \$20,000 and placed on two years supervised probation in 1996. In 2002, he was fined \$2.5 million, the fourth-largest fine ever assessed for archaeological theft. Harelson's legal troubles continue. He is on trial for plotting the murder of law officials and others involved in his 1996 conviction.

Love 'Em and Leave 'Em

Cultural materials on public lands may not be removed, damaged, disturbed, excavated or transferred without BLM permit. Cultural resources include prehistoric and historic artifacts and sites, broken objects and debris more than 100 years old that were used or produced by humans. Protected materials include arrowheads and other stone tools, grinding stones, beads,

baskets, pottery, old bottles, horseshoes, metal tools, graves and trash scatters.

Historic sites such as cabins, saw-mills, graves, trail traces, mining areas, town sites, ranches and railroads are not open to collecting.

Metal detector use is allowed on public lands. Modern money may be collected, but coins and artifacts more than 100 years old may not be collected.

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State Director's Comments



Every good decision passes the common sense test. "Does it make sense" is a standard that may not sound too difficult to achieve, but

when you hear about vandalism and looting of public resources you wonder just how common, common sense is. Incidents of vandalism and looting are increasing. Thieves and looters are destroying the Nation's cultural heritage for personal pleasure and greed.

Cultural resources on the public lands are a record of the lives of the people who have lived on this land from prehistoric times up to the present. The archaeological, paleontological and historical record holds precious information about the people and events that shaped the American West.

Some of the most important and best preserved prehistoric and historic cultural sites in the American West are on public lands in Nevada. BLM has an obligation to manage and protect places with significance to the Nation's cultural heritage, the heritage of Native peoples and fossils, as well as historic pioneer and immigrant

trails, mining, ranching and railroads.

Erosion, wildland fire and recreation can all impact cultural sites, and the BLM strives to address those impacts through its planning process. However, protecting these sites from thieves is our biggest challenge. BLM will issue citations or make arrests as appropriate. Bringing vandals and thieves of archaeological artifacts to justice provides a deterrent, but the real opportunity is to enhance awareness of the importance of leaving cultural artifacts in place.

Look at and enjoy cultural resources, then leave them in place for others and future generations.

Senseless acts of vandalism, like shooting signs or restrooms, end up costing the American taxpayer. Dumping trash or junk on open lands shows a lack of community pride as well. Many rural communities would like to increase tourism to benefit their local economy.

Part of BLM's mission is to address quality of life issues such as clean air and water, access to recreational opportunities, and safeguard cultural and fossil resources. It is also BLM's mission to provide for a sound economy through the production of energy,

food and fiber and by sustaining local communities and their heritage.

Visitors appreciate communities and public land facilities that are clean and kept in good repair. BLM is committed to helping communities in these efforts.

-Bob Abbey

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Help Wanted: Report Vandalism

Crimes against society versus crimes against a person. How many of us would step in to protect a person being victimized, but do nothing if we see vandals destroying public lands resources?

That is one of the things Erika Schumacher would like to change as state staff ranger for the BLM. She is one of 20 uniformed rangers whose job is to protect public lands and assist individuals using the public lands.

Vandalism and dumping, which degrade the public's resources, are commonplace, but might not be if people weren't prone to take the attitude "if it is not mine or in my backyard, then it is not my problem."

Eighty-four specific vandalism incidents were recorded by BLM Nevada law enforcement personnel last year. Reports

range from defacing caves and petroglyphs to damaging natural features, signs and structures. Battered, spray painted picnic tables and restrooms or signs shot full of holes are more common than those that aren't defaced. Other forms of vandalism, tearing up the desert with an off highway vehicle, or dumping construction material, old appliances and cars are widespread.

Taking pride in your community is a good reason to report vandalism when you see it. Weekdays the best place to call is the nearest BLM office or law enforcement's toll free number, 1-800-521-6501. Schumacher says the Nevada Department of Wildlife dispatcher at (775) 688-1331 can reach rangers on weekends.

-Maxine Shane

Nevada State Office

we are proud to announce...

Amy L. Lueders begins her duties as BLM Nevada's associate state director in January. She is presently the field manager at the BLM New Mexico's Las Cruces Field Office. The Las Cruces Field Office has significant programs in cultural resources, realty, range, minerals, wilderness, recreation and watershed management. As the field manager, Lueders supervises more than 70 employees and oversees 5.5 million surface acres.

Lueders began her BLM career in 1984 as an economist in the BLM Washington Office. She has worked there in a number of budget development and program analysis positions.

The associate state director is the number two position in the BLM Nevada organization, reporting directly to State Director Bob Abbey. Lueders graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics.



PUBLIC LAND

Millions of Dollars to Benefit Nevadans

While most people can only daydream about what they'd buy if they had millions of dollars, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton has the enviable task of deciding how millions of dollars from the sale of public land in the Las Vegas Valley will be spent. The Secretary recently approved the expenditure of nearly \$385 million for parks and trails, capital improvement projects, conservation initiatives and purchases of environmentally sensitive lands.

Under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act, the BLM is charged with selling public lands marked for disposal in Clark County at auction to the highest bidder. The Act is specific about how the money raised from the auctions may be spent.

The BLM has established an open process in accepting and ranking projects and purchases with the sales money. Nominations are accepted, ranked, selected and prioritized by the federal land management agencies, the State of Nevada, local Nevada governments and the general public. The recommendations are presented to the Secretary of the Interior for her decision.

"Selling public land in the Las Vegas Valley marked for disposal is reaping exponential benefits for the citizens of Clark County," said BLM State Director Bob Abbey. "Not only are we accommodating the phenomenal growth in the area, but the funding available for conservation and recreation projects and to purchase environmentally sensitive land provides residents and visitors to the Las Vegas area with outstanding recreation opportunities."

Round 4 Expenditures

- Parks, trails and natural areas in Clark County: \$104 million for 28 projects, including the Tropicana and Flamingo Wash Recreation project for \$4.5 million and the regional park at the Craig Ranch Golf Course for \$38 million.

- Capital Improvement Projects at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and other areas administered by the BLM in Clark County and the Spring Mountain National Recreation Area: \$118 million for 40 projects, such as the Oliver Ranch Science Center and wild horse and burro facility for \$22.5 million.
- Clark County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan development: \$16 million for 40 projects, including songbird monitoring for habitat restoration at Lake Mead for \$118,000 and the Spring Mountain landscape assessment for \$2.4 million.
- Conservation Initiatives on federal land in Clark County: \$36 million for 12 projects, including "Take Pride in America" litter and desert dumping clean-up for \$3.3 million and \$6.7 million for Backcountry Access: A recreation, education and conservation program.
- Acquire environmentally sensitive land throughout the state: \$111 million for 50 parcels, two of which are a private in-holding in Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (Nye County) to be acquired by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for \$85,000, and Falcon Capital (878 acre Casey property in Washoe Valley) to be acquired by BLM for \$22.2 million.

The Secretary also recently approved additional Round 3 funds for environmentally sensitive land in Clark County: \$9 million for 4 parcels, two properties along the Muddy River near Moapa to be acquired by the BLM, and two properties within the Spring Mountains to be acquired by the Forest Service.

The BLM is accepting nominations for Round 5 expenditures. For more information go to www.nv.blm.gov and click on Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act.

Dean Baker: Outstanding Rancher of the Year

In some respects, "Outstanding Rancher" is a term that barely does justice to Dean Baker. Baker could easily be named "Overachiever of the Year," too. Sure, Baker Ranches, Inc., is an outstanding operation. Dean, his wife Barbara and three sons, David, Craig and Tom, operate a cattle and farming operation that crosses into Utah. They farm about 2,000 acres of alfalfa, barley and corn, and run 2,000 cows, which summer on irrigated meadows and winter on public land allotments. Under Baker's management, the farming, feedlot and cow/calf numbers have more than doubled since he became president and principal owner in 1959.

Baker has an exceptional business attitude toward working with federal land managers on the 68,000-acre Smith Creek Allotment north of Baker, Nev. The goals and objectives for the ranch are to promote best management practices to integrate livestock production with the BLM's multiple use mandate to achieve the Standards and Guidelines established by the Northeast Great Basin Resource Advisory Council. Baker's grazing practices have improved the range and have also helped the operation meet its economic goals.

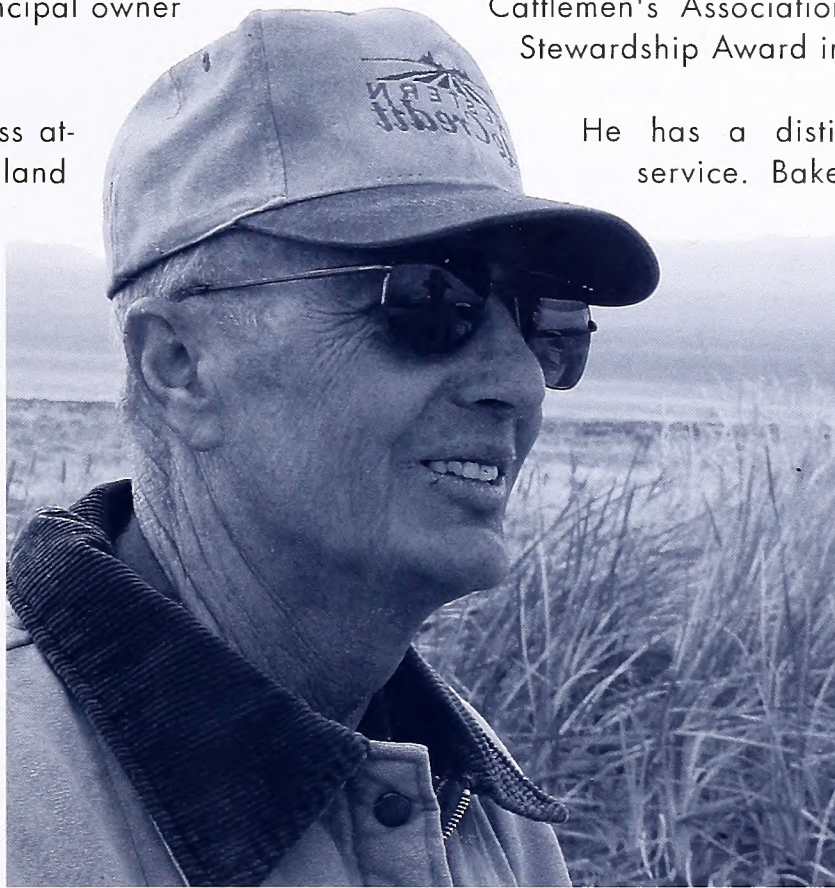
Baker's management practices are impressive. He uses an exten-

sive four-pasture rest and rotation system; he employs extensive herding of livestock on horseback to ensure proper concentration and distribution on the entire allotment; he installs at his own expense all necessary, BLM-approved range improvements; and his maintenance on range projects exceeds the requirements established by cooperative agreement.

Being named Outstanding Nevada Rancher of the Year isn't the first accolade Baker has received. He was named "Nevada Cattleman of the Year" last year by the Nevada Cattlemen's Association and received the Utah BLM's Stewardship Award in 1996.

He has a distinguished record of community service. Baker is a longtime member of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association, serving as director and on the executive committee. He serves on the board of the Producers Livestock Marketing Association out of Salt Lake, the past three years as chairman. In past years, Baker was a member of the Nevada State Tax Commission and served as a board member of Mt. Wheeler Power.

Oh, one more thing, Baker also owns and manages a sand, gravel and concrete business.



outstanding, too...

Commendations for Outstanding Rancher of the Year were awarded to Sandy Brown of the Paiute Meadows Ranch and Silver State Industries' Nevada State Prison Ranch.

Brown is recognized for her extraordinary efforts to comply with a complicated allotment management plan after Lahontan cutthroat trout were unexpectedly introduced into the North Fork of Battle Creek. Brown grazes about 525 head on the Paiute Meadows Allotment.

Silver State's ranch manager Tim Bryan and his staff are recognized for managing a unique operation that employs prison inmates. The ranch has 600 acres under irrigation and about 400 acres in native pasture with the Carson River running through it. The ranch is diversified and must remain profitable to continue operating. It consists of a dairy, processing plant, beef cows and feedlot (650 head), farming, caring for BLM and State estray horses, and a wild horse training program.



Resource Advisory Councils Prepare for New Year

BLM Nevada's citizen-based Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) got together in Las Vegas in October to welcome new members, become acquainted with their counterparts from around the state, and set priorities for the next year. Each RAC developed their priorities based on BLM priorities. The RACs will advise BLM on several land use plan amendments and environmental impact statements, alternative energy projects (geothermal and wind), Round 5 nominations and expenditures for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act, and wild horse and burro issues.

Nevada has three RACs, each consisting of 15 members, to provide advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues. RAC members are chosen for their involvement in natural resource issues, for their ability to provide informed, objective advice on a broad array of public lands issues, and for their commitment to collaboration in seeking solutions to those issues. Members volunteer their valuable time to serve on these councils.

Mojave-Southern Great Basin RAC

Claire Toomey, recreation
Mark Hill, state agency
Kenny Anderson, Native American

Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin RAC

Craig Young, archaeology
John Dicks, recreation
John Gebhardt, state agency

Northeastern Great Basin RAC

Richard Hankins, wildlife

Additional information about the RACs is available at www.nv.blm.gov, click on "What We Do" and choose "Resource Advisory Councils."

-Debra Kolkman
Nevada State Office

Healthy Forests Initiative

Tamarisk along the Virgin River are becoming more and more scarce thanks to the City of Mesquite Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project which was chosen as one of the 15 original pilots of President Bush's Healthy Forest Initiative to prevent damage caused by catastrophic wildfire and address unhealthy forests in crisis.

The 1,700-acre tamarisk removal project along the Virgin River was chosen because of its wildland urban interface boundary and fire danger. Tamarisk is a highly-flammable, super-competitive species that shoves out natives and creates a more fire prone community. In the past several years, numerous fires have burned in tamarisk stands along the river.

An expedited environmental assessment period complied with all environmental laws and was completed this summer. Because six federally listed species and two designated critical habitats are within the project area, the Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted

at the onset of the planning effort. The scoping process heavily involved the City of Mesquite and the Virgin River Conservation Partnership, an inclusive public-private stakeholders group.

About 300 acres will be treated this winter. The project is one of four tamarisk projects under way on the Virgin River.

While reducing the risk of fire in the urban interface is important, the project will also accomplish a number of other objectives. These include invasive weed control, improved water quality and water savings on a river in which all water is allocated.

Methods of removal include hand-thinning, mechanical removal and herbicide application.

-Kirsten Cannon
Las Vegas Field Office

Counting Birds of Prey on a Serious Scale Long-standing Partnership for the Birds

Imagine sitting on top of a mountain for three months and counting every bird that flies overhead...maybe even try to catch a few thousand of them.

At the Goshute Mountains observation point about 25 miles southwest of Wendover, volunteers and staff of HawkWatch International have been counting, capturing, banding, and studying raptors since the project began in 1979.

Eighteen different species have been counted and captured over the past 24 years. Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks are abundant. Golden and bald eagles, northern goshawks, American kestrels, prairie and peregrine falcons, turkey vultures, ospreys, and hawks—red-tailed, Swainson's, ferruginous, red-shouldered, and rough-legged.

Each year from mid-August to mid-November, observers record up to 25,000 raptors of 18 species flying south along the crest of the Goshute Mountain Range within the Intermountain Flyway. This is one of the largest known concentrations of migratory raptors in the western United States.

About 2,000 birds annually are captured at the site and banded or fit with radio collars. To date, more than 50,000 raptors have been banded at the site, which provides information on raptor movements and conservation needs. Satellite tracking has also yielded additional valuable information about the migratory habits and routes followed by the Goshute migrants.

BLM has had a long-standing partnership with HawkWatch International, a non-profit organization based in Salt Lake City, Utah. Based on the annual budget, BLM supports HawkWatch with cash and/or in-kind services, such as helicopter support. BLM receives an annual report from HawkWatch that analyzes all the data collected.



HawkWatch International volunteer Dennis McSharry holds an immature northern goshawk at the Goshute Mountains observation point.

BLM PHOTO BY RAY LISTER

"BLM would not be able to gather this kind of information without this partnership," said Ray Lister, BLM Elko wildlife biologist. "The information is important for land management agencies as it's used to make decisions regarding habitat for sensitive species. Because raptors are high on the food chain, they act as a barometer for the ecosystem. Population trend data can be an indicator that there may need to be changes in management on the ground.

This helps us manage to prevent these species from being listed as threatened and endangered."

The Goshute Mountain observation point is a Watchable Wildlife site and is open to the public in the Goshute Wilderness Study Area. Hawkwatch International staff offer educational programs at the site.

For more information about the HawkWatch program, call Ray Lister or Tamara Hawthorne, at the BLM Elko Field Office (775) 753-0200.

-Mike Brown
Elko Field Office

Grassroots Movement Tackles

A billboard on the outskirts of Ely urges passers by to "Protect wildlife habitat. Stay on Roads and Trails."

Nowhere could that message be more pertinent than in the Duck Creek Basin, about 30 miles to the northeast.

The meadows, creeks, wildlife and forests in the basin make it a longtime favorite recreation area for residents and out-of-towners. In recent years, that popularity has boomed, partly because of the population explosion in southern Nevada and neighboring states.

But popularity has its price. In Duck Creek Basin, as elsewhere, that price is habitat destruction, warns Dave Jeppesen, BLM Ely Field Office outdoor recreation planner.

"In the early 1970s, the basin contained about 250 miles of roads," said Jeppesen. "In 2001, the BLM and Forest Service inventoried more than 390 miles of roads. That's 140 miles of new roads in less than 30 years – an increase of more than 65 percent, all in an area of about 120 square miles."

This proliferation of "user-created" roads, rather than roads where they should be, prompted a grassroots movement among White Pine County residents



who feared for the loss of one of their most valued treasures. The White Pine Coordinated Resource Committee formed the Duck Creek Basin Technical Review Team in January 2000 to develop a travel management plan.

Membership on the 20-member team included local residents and landowners, camping and hiking enthusiasts, off highway vehicle users, ranchers and wilderness advocates. Also represented, he said, were Native American interests, the BLM, Forest Service and Nevada Division of Wildlife.

Jeppesen said that all the team's decisions were made on a consensus basis with each member casting a single vote. He said the team returned in January 2002 with its recommendations for what a Duck Creek Travel Management Plan.

e s V T o o M a n y R o a d s P r o b l e m

Habitat Roads rails



to reduce the number of roads per square mile, as well as stem the pioneering of new routes."

The recommendations in the plan designate which roads to keep open and which roads to rehabilitate. BLM will begin to implement the plan with some temporary emergency off-road vehicle limitations. The route designations will be incorporated into the Ely Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement that is currently in progress.

"The first consensus was that all vehicles stay on existing roads," said Jeppesen. "The team wanted

-Chris Hanefeld
Ely Field Office



BLM PHOTO BY CHRIS HANEFELD

Rural Nevada Community Takes Pride in Their Public Land

Rick Stork, landfill supervisor for the City of Ely, points to the top of a 20-foot high stack of Freon-emptied refrigerators. A mountain of used appliances was collected through White Pine Green Up, a five-year pilot program aimed at reducing illegal dumping on public lands by allowing residents to drop off old appliances, leftover construction material, worn-out cars and tires free of charge. Still in its first year, the program is exceeding expectations. So far, people have taken about 250

tons of scrap metal, 252 refrigerators, and more than 4,000 used tires. Two Ely businesses volunteered to take used batteries free of charge and have collected more than 200 car and truck batteries. White Pine Green Up is a collaborative effort by the City of Ely, Nevada Division of Forestry, BLM Ely Field Office and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Ely Ranger District.

-Chris Hanefeld
Ely Field Office



Water Projects Are Brewing in Reno's North Valleys

There may not be a true "fight" going on for certain fresh waters in northern Nevada, but there certainly is stiff competition and interest in the subject. The BLM Carson City Field Office is working on two water supply and transmission rights-of-way applications, one from the Fish Springs Ranch LLC and one from Intermountain Water Supply LTD, two independent water companies that are proposing new projects in Washoe County.

Because the actions are similar, BLM will analyze both proposals in one environmental impact statement (EIS), the North Valleys Water Projects. Each company is proposing to construct and operate water supply and transmission projects to meet present and future water demands of the Stead/Silver Lake/Lemmon valley areas (north valleys). The proposed projects consist of groundwater production wells, pump stations, transmission pipelines and terminal water storage tanks.

The Fish Springs Ranch LLC proposed pipeline, carrying about 8,000 acre-feet per year, would begin at the Fish Springs Ranch and proceed south about 33 miles to the north valleys.

The Intermountain Water Supply LTD proposed pipeline would carry about 3,500 acre-feet per year, beginning in Dry Valley, proceeding east a short distance before tying into the same general route south to the north valleys, about 24 miles.

Water Importation Not a New Idea

A project similar to these was proposed in 1993 by a different company. That project involved moving nearly 13,000 acre-feet of water per year from the Fish Springs Ranch via an underground pipeline to the Lemmon Valley area. A draft EIS was prepared in response to the project application. As part of the ground water study, a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) model was used to simulate ground water conditions beneath the Fish Springs Ranch and areas surrounding the ranch. The model was also extended three miles westward to include the Sierra Army Depot (Depot) at Herlong, Calif. On review, the Army considered the water modeling results to be seriously flawed and suggested that project implementation would result in adverse

impacts to on-going efforts to clean up existing ground water contamination at the facility.

The project was protested by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe because of conflicts with the preliminary settlement of the Truckee River negotiations between the tribe and Sierra Pacific Power Co., and the tribe's claims to ground water rights under the Smoke Creek Desert at the north end of the reservation.

Work on the EIS was suspended by the Secretary of the Interior in 1994 pending resolution of three issues: 1) concurrence of the USGS on regional ground water modeling; 2) Sierra Army Depot ground water contamination; 3) concurrence from the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe on trust responsibility issues.

A number of federal, state and local agencies have been identified as potential cooperating agencies in the North Valleys Water Projects. The list includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, USGS, Pyramid Lake Tribe, Washoe Tribe

of Nevada and California, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Nevada State Water Engineer, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Lassen County, Washoe County, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, Airport Authority of Washoe County, cities of Reno and Sparks, and the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency.

Draft EIS Schedule

Public scoping on the EIS was conducted in September and October. The Draft EIS is expected to be ready for public release by April 2004. A Final EIS is scheduled to be completed by September 2004, with a Record of Decision to be issued by December 2004.

Comments on the EIS may be sent by mail, e-mail, or fax to: BLM Carson City Field Office, Attention Terri Knutson, 5665 Morgan Mill Road, Carson City, NV 89701. Phone: (775) 885-6156, Fax: (775) 885-6147. E-mail: nvalleyswater_eis@blm.gov.

-Mark Struble
Carson City Field Office

**"In the West,
whiskey's for drinking,
but water's for
fighting."
- Mark Twain**

THEY NEED A HOME

These Graduates Are Not Only Looking For Jobs

About 40 to 45 saddle-ready wild horses trained by the inmates at the Warm Springs Correctional Center graduate each year after 90 days of training. Like any other graduation, there are tears hidden, if not shed, on graduation day, usually a Saturday. But, a new, eager equine trainee awaits each inmate on Monday.

The gentling program in Carson City began in October 2000. It is a cooperative effort shared by Silver State Industries (the Nevada Department of Corrections industries program) and the Nevada Department of Agriculture. Originally the program only trained "estrays" which are horses that belong to the State and are mostly found in the Virginia City area. Last year, the inmates began to train wild horses that are removed from public lands managed by the BLM.

Under a memorandum of understanding, the BLM pays for training, as well as veterinary care. Most horses

each minimum security inmate struts their stuff, and the live bidding begins on each horse.



Inmate lifts trained wild horse's back hoof to show potential adopters that the horse is agreeable to having his hoofs cleaned and trimmed.



PHOTOS BY BOB GOODMAN

Inmates ride the wild horses they've trained to show potential adopters the horses gait and responsiveness.

are saddle trained; however, there is also a provision for halter training, especially for younger animals. On adoption day, qualified bidders gather to watch the inmate-equine pairs parade around the small arena at the Paul Iverson training center. Then, each animal and

Although bids start at \$125, most audiences immediately appreciate the hours of training each horse has received. Some inmates ride bareback. Some go under the horse's belly. Some stand on and jump off the horse's back. Each shows how easy it is to handle the horse's feet and to remove the saddle. Trainer Hank Curry elaborates on the personalities of each animal, and explains that each inmate-equine team practices loading into a stock trailer. Successful bids at the October 2003, adoption ranged from \$675 to \$1,925 per animal.

The next scheduled adoptions are Sat., Feb. 21 and Sat., May 22, 2004. Photos of the animals will be posted at www.nv.blm.gov about a month prior to the adoptions.

-Maxine Shane
Nevada State Office



TECHNOLOGY

Fire Stations Provide a National Model

The raising of a new flag officially opened the Red Rock Canyon Fire Station on August 27. The only thing that flew higher than the flag at the Red Rock Canyon Fire Station was the pride of knowing the station is a national model for a design-build contract to build a pre-designed "standard" building, which is an effective alternative to the traditional low-bid construction process.

In April 2002, the Las Vegas Field Office started a race against the clock to award a construction contract for three fire stations before funding ran out on the last day in September, the end of the fiscal year.

In less than a year and a half, a team identified and solved a variety of challenges. These challenges included short turn-around time, difficulty in awarding a usable facility for the available funds, using modular units, finding additional funding so remaining elements could be built, and the usual coordination with state, county and local entities.

The Las Vegas Field Office worked closely with Denver National Science and Technology Center and the Architectural/Engineering firm, MaxFour to complete the project in such a cost and time effective way.

The fire stations were funded by a variety of sources including appropriated funds, National Interagency Fire Center funds and the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act. Design and construction of all three stations totaled \$3.9 million.

- The Red Rock Fire Station boasts 4,140 square feet of living space, 15 bedrooms, 1,285 square feet of office space and 6,400 square feet of space for pull-through engine bays, restrooms, and storage.
- The Pahrump Fire Station features 3,550 square feet of living space, 11 bedrooms, including 100 square feet office and 4,950 square feet of space with two engine bays, lockers, and enclosed storage.
- The Logandale Fire Station offers 3,550 square feet of living space, 11 bedrooms, including 100 square feet office.

The new stations will help the BLM better protect these communities from wildland fire.

-Kirsten Cannon
Las Vegas Field Office

Seeds of Success

What does BLM Nevada and a botanical garden an ocean away have in common? Collecting seeds in the Mojave Desert.

The BLM partnered with Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, England, to participate in the Millennium Seed Bank. The goal of the seed bank is to collect seeds from 10 percent of the world's flora by 2010.

BLM worked with Kew to identify 2,000 native species that grow on BLM managed land that would be suitable for collection. Under the agreement, Kew cleans the seeds and keeps half for its seed bank. The other half is returned to BLM for local long-term storage or restoration projects.

Because plants in drier areas have not been studied as extensively as other areas, a program dubbed Seeds of Success was formed under the partnership. The Las Vegas Field Office was chosen to collect samples for the Seeds of Success.

And successful collection has indeed taken place. By the end of September, the Las Vegas Field Office had collected 21 species. The collection target is 20,000 seeds for each species. An additional 60 species are identified for the Las Vegas area collection over the next seven years.


The Las Vegas Field Office is one of six field offices staffed with Student Conservation Association (SCA) teams to collect native seed for the Seeds of Success. Other locations include Kanab, Utah; Bishop, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; Pineville, Oregon and Alturas, Calif.

The sites are chosen for their high-caliber botanists and SCA interns are also selected based on the experience they have in botany.

-Kirsten Cannon
Las Vegas Field Office



Janette Adrian and Sharon Green, Student Conservation Association team members, collect seed for the Seeds of Success project.



Mojave Max has Mojo, Program Wins National Award

Mojave Max is a desert tortoise who lives at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area's Visitor Center. He is also the mascot for the "Mojave Max Education Program." The program targets Spanish-speaking students from rural and disadvantaged areas. Students learn about the endangered desert tortoise and its habitat needs.

A team recruits, trains and places interns in Clark County schools to teach the program. The program is a component of the Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan to help the public be aware and understand the needs of the declining desert tortoise population and ways to protect them. BLM's interpretive and educational programs increase public understanding and support of the multiple use mission and management efforts.

Interns are accepted from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, the Community College of Southern Nevada and a community volunteer pool. This past year, the team's Mojave Max program reached 42 schools and 242 classroom teachers.

The Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area Interpretation and Environmental Education Team was presented the Bureau of Land Management "Excellence in Interpretation and Environmental Education Award" at the recent National Association for Interpretation workshop in Sparks, Nev. Team members include Kathy August and Lavern Dickey, BLM staff at Red Rock Canyon; Cynthia Pfaendler, Sky McClain and Melissa Campbell with the Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association; and Scot Bahan and Patricia Mynster with Environmental Careers Organization.

Go to www.mojavemax.com for learn more about the program.

National Environmental Award Goes to Nevada BLM'er

Reclaiming and closing mine sites is a challenging job, even more so when the mining company and its bonding agency have declared bankruptcy leaving the site in an imminently hazardous condition.

That's what Craig Smith, a physical scientist at the BLM's Nevada State Office, faced when he took on the Olinghouse mine site case. To make matters worse, a large amount of cyanide solution was draining from the pad where gold was extracted from crushed ore. The cyanide leak was rapidly filling up a reservoir five miles up slope from the Truckee River and three miles from the Pyramid Lake Tribal boundary. If the leak wasn't contained quickly it could seriously damage the threatened and endangered fishery in the river.

By bringing the mining industry, state regulators, federal partners, the tribe and the bankrupt company, a plan was developed to quickly deal with the threat to the environment.

Within one year, all parties agreed on a solution to the problem and five months later all reclamation requirements were completed. Estimated time savings to the BLM was about two years and cost savings were about \$200,000.

Smith's innovative approach to reclaim and close the bankrupt mine site has resulted in an individual Environmental Achievement Award for Environmental Stewardship from the Department of the Interior. Smith is one of three individuals to receive the award, which was presented to him at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

In addition to handling mine bankruptcies within the state, Smith also serves as a liaison between the BLM and the State of Nevada. He is responsible for coordinating the BLM and State regulatory programs related to mining and environmental protection.

This Is Rocket Science

"FAA? I need a clearance to 100,000 feet."

Waysie Atkins, the permit guy with the Arizona High Power Rocketry Club, is on his satellite phone in the middle of the Black Rock Playa getting the OK for a club member to go for some glory at the annual experimental rocket launch.

The club has a 40,000 foot altitude waiver from the FAA, but when someone has a rocket they expect to go above 40,000 feet, they must get the OK from the FAA. Altitude waivers over 40,000 feet, up to 100,000 feet are good for a window of time, typically one-half hour.

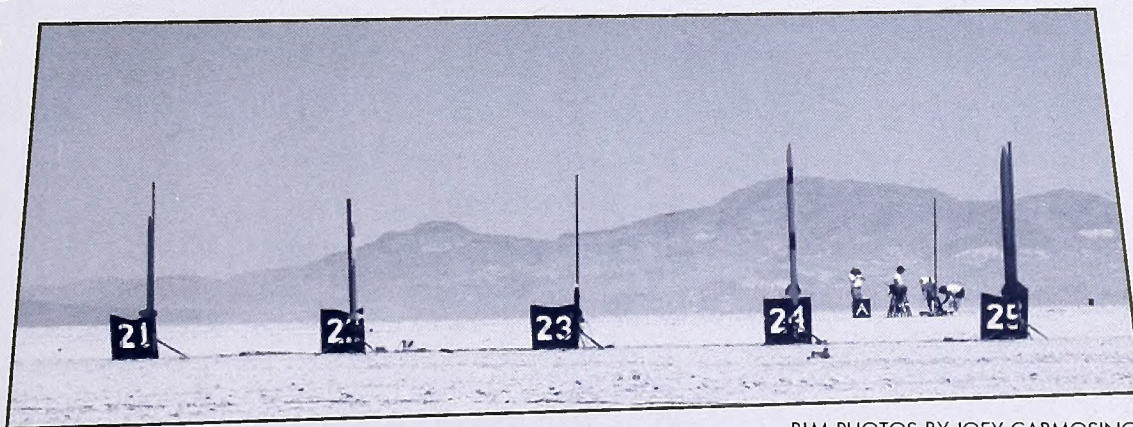
"This is the best place to launch rockets in the world," said Atkins. His club and two other rocketry groups, AERO-PAC and Civilian Space eXploration Team (CSXT), are issued special use permits by the BLM's Winnemucca Field Office to launch high-powered, experimental and amateur-built rockets. Winnemucca is one of a few field offices in the bureau issuing rocketry permits for high-altitude, experimental launches.



To launch a rocket, the owner must be affiliated with a rocketry club, have an appropriate license for the size of the motor, and have a license to make the rocket propellant used to pack the motor. The club checks each rocket for stability and is responsible for controlling the launch and ensuring the range is clear.

The rockets vary in size from pencil-thin, one-footers to more than 10 feet tall with an eight-inch diameter. For example, one 50 pound, 9-foot, 4-inch diameter rocket with a high performance N3000 motor was expected to go 20,000 to 25,000 feet with 800 lbs of thrust at lift off.

When everything is right, the rocket roars straight up and when the fuel is spent, a parachute pops out to bring the rocket gently back to earth. It's a huge thrill for the rocketeer when a launch and retrieval goes according to plan. But, it gets real exciting when



BLM PHOTOS BY JOEY CARMOSINO

things go awry. Like when a rocket goes horizontal instead of vertical on launch. If that happens, one may duck the errant rocket, but running and screaming is the mark of a fool.

BLM's Caliente Staff Dedicate New Building

The BLM Caliente Field Station staff is proud of the new steel and red-toned cinderblock building that replaces the worn out modular structure that was their office for the past 35 years. The site will also have new fire crew quarters, an engine barn and a shop building. From left to right: Randall Johnson, range technician; Shirley Christman-Johnson, rangeland management specialist; Karen Prentice, rangeland management specialist; Michael Fewell, range technician; Bruce Winslow, outdoor recreation planner; Everett Bartz, range-



land management specialist; Domenic Bolognani, range-land management specialist; Maggie Orr, range technician; Mary Buck, administrative support assistant; Bradley Benson, motor vehicle operator; Michael Kuyper, range-land management specialist; Jared Redington, wild horse and burro specialist; Louise Allard, information receptionist; Wendy McCrosky, computer assistant.

-Chris Hanefeld
Ely Field Office

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